

VERMONT . . . KEEPING IN TOUCH



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Vermont State Program Unit Does Stream Restoration Work

On September 9 and 10, the Vermont State Program Unit participated in a community outreach trip to Vermont. The Unit traveled to the White River Junction area and conducted stream restoration activities on a farm in Rochester. The project was funded with EPA Section 319 funds and was a true community effort. Participants included the US Fish and Wildlife Service, US Forest Service, Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, White River Partnership, students from a local 9th grade science class, the farmer, and three local volunteers.

The work involved the stabilization of 400 feet of the White River by anchoring evergreen trees to the streambank with steel duck-bill cables. The trees will catch sediment and help to build up the bank. This project will also include planting vegetation along a 25 foot buffer strip next year. This stabilization technique is innovative because it is more economical than traditional projects using rip rap and it is less disruptive to the environment. The Vermont Unit contributed "people power" and at the same time

developed a better understanding of a local project. Special thanks to Mike Kline of the Department of Environmental Conservation and Mr. and Mrs. Kennett of Liberty Hill Farm in Rochester.



Lake Champlain Basin Program Goes International!

Activities on Lake Champlain have always been closely coordinated with our international neighbor, Quebec, Canada, who shares the Basin with New York and Vermont. Within the past year the Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP) has been sharing expertise with others interested in resource protection. Last fall, the Institute For Sustainable Communities coordinated an exchange between Lake Champlain and Lake Ohrid in

Macedonia and Albania. This past

July, the LCBP hosted a delegation

of scientists and managers from the Lake

Laguna Development Authority in the

Philippines sponsored by

the US-Asia Environmental

Partnership. Most exciting is a growing relationship with Lake Toba in Indonesia.

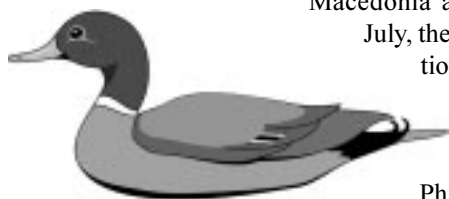
Located on the island of Sumatra, Lake Toba is the largest lake in Indonesia. Like Lake Champlain, Lake Toba is important culturally and economically to the people of the region and supports a tourist industry as well as agriculture and forest industries. Both

lakes have a major paper/pulp mill and both share similar management issues including degraded water quality, loss of habitat and biological diversity, and the invasion of nuisance nonnative plants and animals. Managing these lakes is a special challenge because of multiple government jurisdiction and numerous stakeholders.

In November of 1996, Lisa Borre of the LCBP was invited to Indonesia to share some of the Lake Champlain management experiences and to determine whether a sustained exchange program between the two lakes was possible and promising. The trip was a great success and in the short time since there have been many plans laid for further exchange.

More recently, the Council of State Governments approved a grant proposal entitled "Lake Toba-Lake Champlain Sister Lakes Technical Exchange." This grant has enabled a delegation of Indonesians to travel to Vermont in mid-September and meet with stakeholders from Lake Champlain and learn about environmental technologies. Lake Champlain delegations will travel to Lake Toba as well. Our partnerships are ever expanding.

To obtain information about these international activities, please contact Lee Steppacher at (617) 565-4883.



Fifteen Miles Falls Hydroelectric Project Relicensing

The relicensing of the Fifteen Miles Falls (FMF) Hydroelectric Project is innovative in two key ways: the cooperative stakeholders process and the environmental benefits gained in the settlement agreement. The FMF Project is located on the upper Connecticut River in the reach between Waterford and Ryegate, Vermont. This project consists of two large seasonal storage and peaking power reservoirs (Moore and Comerford) and a smaller dam and hydro facility (McIndoes). The FMF Project is the largest hydroelectric operation in New England and provides a unique combination of storage and very high generating capacity. This combination allows automatic operation by the New England



Power Pool to balance electric generation and load in the New England area and to produce large amounts of energy to instantly respond to unexpected power demands.

A cooperative relicensing process for the FMF Project was initiated by the New England Power Company (NEPCO) during February 1996. Since the operating license issued by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission expires in 2001, NEPCO filed notice to relicense the project and prepared an initial consultation document. Subsequently, the cooperative relicensing project proceeded by hiring a technical advisor to represent the non-governmental organizations. The resulting stakeholders group includes a wide variety of interests including state and federal government agencies, environmental groups, watershed groups, and local planning agencies.

The stakeholders group has been meeting to define the specific field studies and data requirements necessary to secure a new license. The group's focus since November 1996 includes the

development of an expedited settlement agreement relating to license conditions because NEPCO announced plans to divest its generating facilities and project lands in response to deregulation in the electrical utility industry.

Following nine months of negotiations the final settlement agreement was prepared as four documents that provide for operational changes at three dams and increased flow releases at the Connecticut Lakes system in New Hampshire.

These changes will result in the following environmental gains:

- **evaluation and implementation of controls to insure dissolved oxygen and other water quality criteria are achieved in project and downstream waters**
- **increased flow releases to improve the aquatic habitat in 100 miles of the Connecticut River including coldwater fishery habitat**
- **control of impoundment levels during spring bass spawning season to enhance the bass fishery**
- **protection of approximately 12,000 acres of NEPCO land through permanent conservation easements**

On September 2, Governors John Dean of Vermont, Jeanne Shaheen of New Hampshire, and John Rowe, the Chairman of NEPCO participated in a formal signing ceremony of the settlement agreement for relicensing of the FMF Project. EPA and the US Fish and Wildlife Service attended the signing ceremony along with representatives from the stakeholders groups, company officials and staff, as well as state and local officials from New Hampshire and Vermont.

NEPCO recently selected US Generating Company as the buyer of its generating business. The terms of the settlement agreement will be assumed by US Generating Company when it takes ownership of the FMF facilities.

For further information please contact Bill Wandle at (617) 565-3233.

Addressing Indoor Air Quality in Vermont Schools

Mike Rogers of the Office of Radiation and Indoor Air's Indoor Environments Division is on a temporary assignment to the Vermont Department of Health. Mike is an engineer with an MBA and has been working in that office for just over three years. During this assignment, Mike will conduct training and educational sessions on indoor air quality (IAQ) in schools and help with the implementation of *IAQ Tools for Schools* as well as assist in the development and implementation of Vermont's strategy to address the issue. Having Mike in Vermont provides an excellent opportunity to greatly increase our local assistance.

There is a high level of interest in Vermont to improve indoor air quality in schools. Vermont's Indoor Air Quality Committee is evaluating whether to require the use of EPA's *IAQ Tools for Schools* in all state schools. Vermont will benefit from technical and training assistance in the area of Indoor Air Quality in schools, including assistance with implementation of *IAQ Tools for Schools*. This in turn will benefit EPA's Indoor Air Quality program in schools around the country.

The People Corner

New Staff Added to the Vermont State Program Unit

This spring, the Vermont State Program Unit welcomed Erik Beck to the group as the new groundwater coordinator. Erik will be responsible for working on all aspects of groundwater in Vermont. He will also be representing the Vermont Unit on the Connecticut River Joint Commission meetings and working on the economics of environmental protection throughout New England.

Erik worked in EPA's Region 9 (San Francisco, CA) Air office for four years before coming to the Vermont Unit. At Region 9, Erik worked on controlling hydrocarbon emissions from factories, refineries, and other businesses. He also worked on developing "market

incentive" programs to reduce pollution. Erik grew up in the maritime Pacific Northwest. He is trained as an economist and received his Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts Degrees in economics from the University of Washington in Seattle.



Back row, William Wandle, Erik Beck, Anthony Ciccarelli, Lee Steppacher, Front row, Betsy Davis, Marisa Nopakun, Beth Alafat, and Lynne Hamjian

Goodbye and Good Luck to Wendy Houston

As we welcome a new member to the Vermont State Program Unit, we say goodbye to another. Wendy Houston left EPA this summer in search of "greener pastures." Wendy has been a key member of the Vermont Unit. She worked on nonpoint source pollution and Lake Champlain projects. Wendy knew the true meaning of "partnership" and had forged strong bonds with all of the key players in Vermont. We will miss Wendy and we wish her the best at her new home in Northfield, VT.

Special Thanks to Marisa Nopakun

Marisa Nopakun came on board the Vermont State Program Unit this summer as our enthusiastic summer intern, serving as the unit's "Jack of All Trades." She helped with many community activities such as staffing the Resource Room at the Lake Champlain Science Center, locating various farm wells and barnyards for the Department of Agriculture, doing outreach on the public meetings for the performance partnership agreement, assisting in the organization of a stream restoration project for our unit, and organizing this publication. As many of you know from meeting her, Marisa is a warm and friendly person who can get the job done. We all wish Marisa well when she leaves us at the end of September when her internship ends.

Wetlands Training a Success

On August 12, EPA— in cooperation with the Natural Resource Conservation Service, Vermont Nongame and Natural Heritage Program and the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources—offered a two day wetland identification and delineation training. The purpose of the course was to cross-train Vermont Agency of Natural Resource Staff. This is the second year EPA has organized and offered this type of training. It is our hope to expand this effort to other environmental arenas for better technical transfer and training with local, state, and federal agencies and other groups in Vermont. The training continues to be a cooperative effort between EPA, the Natural Resource Conservation Service, and the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources.

This year's class covered the basics of wetland science and how one identifies and delineates wetlands in the field. The class consisted of agency staff from many different backgrounds and regions of the state. Many, many thanks to everyone who helped out, especially the instructors, and to all the participants who resiliently persevered during the second day. It was a morning of cold steady rain making it difficult to stay warm, let alone concentrate on the sessions!

If you have ideas for other types of wetland training needed, please let us know by calling (617) 565-3585 and/or write us a letter addressed to Beth Alafat, US EPA Region 1 (OEP-CVT), JFK Federal Building, Boston, MA 02203.

Performance Partnership Continues to Evolve in Vermont

Vermont and EPA are entering our second year in the performance partnership process in Vermont with continuing success. Under this partnership, states with strong, effective environmental programs will have greater flexibility to focus their efforts on problems they define as most serious. As they track and report publicly on their environmental results, they will emphasize environmental outcomes rather than the number of activities undertaken.



We have seen a positive change in our relationship with Vermont. We hope to continue to change our relationship further this year. Canute Dalmasse, Commissioner of the Vermont DEC, stated that he feels that we have changed from a parent-child to a sibling relationship. Likewise, EPA has demonstrated a true

presence in the state and is trying to play a supporting role as well as a traditional regulatory role. Lynne Hamjian of EPA stated, "We do not want to just show up a couple of times a year when there is a problem or an issue. We want to be there at the table bringing with us our support and ideas in a positive manner."

This process also gives the state the option to combine funds received under several statutes into one or more "performance partnership grants." Vermont will consolidate approximately 10 grants into 3 large grants this year (air, waste and water). They will also integrate all of the programs into one performance partnership agreement with EPA. This will streamline the amount of paperwork and allow us to look at the programs together.

Vermont and EPA have conducted preliminary negotiations over the summer. We conducted a public meeting with a focus group in August to discuss the 1997 mid-year report and to gather input for the 1998 agreement. We held a second public focus group meeting on September to get further input on the draft agreement. Vermont and EPA want to know what issues are important to the public. Where are the special places? What should we be doing more of? We hope to gain a better understanding of the public's opinion this year.

If you are interested in this project, please contact Lynne Hamjian at (617) 565-3486 for further information.

Education Continues to be Emphasis of Radon Program

Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer and may affect as many as one in every six Vermont homes. For the last eight years, EPA has provided the Vermont Health Department with a state indoor radon grant. With the grant money from EPA, the Vermont Radon Program has been:

- working on an ongoing basis with the State Commissioner of Health and the Vermont State Board of Nursing to increase health professional awareness by offering radon testing to all of Vermont's licensed registered nurses
- arranging for school radon testing and mitigation in collaboration with the Vermont Department of Education. In the future, the Fairbanks Museum and Planetarium will assist in these efforts



- enabling a member of the Fairbanks Museum's science staff to present a paper about his or her experience with radon in Vermont at the American Association of Radon Scientists and Technologists' 1997 International Symposium
- continuing radon outreach through the support and coordination of the Tunbridge "World's Fair"

For more information, please contact the toll free radon hotline at (800) 640-0601

Community-based grant programs on the web!

*A new addition to the EPA home page is information on EPA grant programs that supports community-based environmental protection in New England. Visit the website at: <http://www.epa.gov/region01/eco/grants>
For information by telephone please contact Deborah Harstedt at (617) 565-3938.*

The Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Program

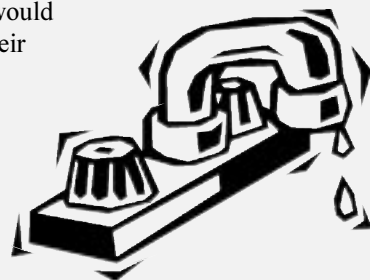
The Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) Program will provide over \$15 million to make physical and operational improvements to water supply systems across the state. On August 6, 1996, President Clinton signed the Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments of 1996 into law, the first Safe Drinking Water Act reform bill in 10 years. It was the first time that the law authorized federal funds for grants to capitalize a DWSRF. This fund is designed to assist water systems finance the cost of needed infrastructure for achieving/maintaining compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act or to further the public health objectives of the act. The act authorizes EPA to award capitalization grants to the states, which in turn provide low-interest loans and other types of assistance to eligible water systems. The DWSRF program will contribute to ensuring that public water systems are safe and affordable, that drinking water systems receiving funds will be properly operated and maintained, and that permanent arrangements will exist in the states to provide financial support for future drinking water needs.

In order to fund the DWSRF for fiscal year 1997, Congress appropriated \$1.275 billion. To be eligible to receive federal capitalization money, a state must establish a drinking water revolving loan fund, have the authority to receive federal monies, and provide a match equal to 20% of the total federal contribution. The DWSRF monies are available for a variety of uses including water system infrastructure improvements, small systems technical assistance, source water protection programs, operator certification, capacity development, loan subsidies for disadvantaged systems, and many other uses.

The Vermont DEC officially submitted a DWSRF capitalization grant application to EPA Region 1 on July 25. Vermont's fiscal year 1997 federal allotment for the DWSRF is \$12.5 million. When matched with State funds of \$2.5 million, Vermont will have a total of over \$15 million to fund the DWSRF program. The VT DEC, Water Supply Division, the Vermont Municipal Bond Bank, and the Vermont Economic Development Authority are the principal entities involved in the implementation of the Vermont DWSRF program. The Water Supply

Division will have the primary responsibility of the implementation of the various policies and procedures which will be followed under the DWSRF program.

On July 8 and 9, DEC held public hearings in Montpelier and Rutland to discuss the Intended Use Plan, including the priority system and project priority list, and to solicit public comment. In addition to these two hearings, members of the DEC held numerous meetings throughout Vermont from December, 1996 to June 1997 with both publicly and privately owned water supply systems, consultants, other state agencies, and other stakeholders to discuss the development of Vermont's DWSRF program. Vermont's focus was to develop a DWSRF program for which public drinking water systems, both publicly and privately owned, would find useful in meeting their infrastructure, capacity, and source water protection needs.



The EPA Regional Office is currently reviewing the overall Vermont capitalization grant application submittal. Once the grant offer is made to the Vermont DEC, water supply systems with eligible projects on the state's project priority list will be able to apply for funding.

The DWSRF funds will give water supply systems, in particular small and disadvantaged systems, the opportunity and means to complete infrastructure additions/replacements to their systems and to improve their level of operational expertise. Such physical and operational improvements will not only help systems achieve and maintain compliance with standards of the Safe Drinking Water Act, but will also contribute to achieving better public health conditions.

**For more information contact
Tony Ciccarelli at (617) 565-3470**

Check out EPA's home page at: <http://www.epa.gov/region01>

Agreements Reached at Vermont Superfund Sites

EPA has completed construction/work at four of the eight Superfund sites in Vermont: BFI Sanitary Landfill, Darling Hill Dump, Old Springfield Landfill, and Tansitor Electronics, Inc. During this past year, EPA made significant progress at two of the remaining four sites, the Parker Landfill and the Bennington Landfill.

- Bennington Municipal Sanitary Landfill in Bennington
- BFI Sanitary Landfill in Rockingham
- Burgess Brothers Landfill in Bennington
- Darling Hill Dump in Lyndonville
- Old Springfield Landfill in Springfield
- Parker Landfill in Lyndon
- Pine Street Canal in Burlington
- Tansitor Electronics, Inc. in Bennington

Parker Landfill

On August 1, Regional Administrator John P. DeVillars signed a consent decree for the Parker Landfill Superfund Site in Lyndon. Thirteen of the 14 potentially responsible parties at the site have agreed to fund and perform certain components of the remedial action, including construction of the landfill cap. The cost of the work to be performed is approximately \$8 million. This settlement is one of only a few settlements that have included mixed funding, through which EPA will reimburse up to \$3 million. The settlement was negotiated over the course of two years and is testament to several regional Superfund initiatives. Among other efforts, the case team:

- used mediation early in the negotiations to help the potentially responsible parties unite
- identified the de minimis parties (parties that disposed of hazardous substances whose amount and toxic effect was minimal)

early in the negotiations and obtained an agreement between all parties to reduce the small parties' transaction costs

- funded an orphan share (amounts attributed to parties that are defunct or insolvent) as outlined in a new EPA guidance
- used mixed funding to achieve a settlement to avoid protracted litigation involving municipal third party defendants and de minimis parties
- apply environmental justice principles to the site clean-up since the site has a disproportionately high impact on a low-income population located in a relatively rural area

The EPA case team for the Parker Landfill site includes Project Manager Sheila Eckman, Site Attorney RuthAnn Sherman, and Community Relations Coordinator Sarah White.

Bennington Landfill

On August 9, the U. S. Attorney's Office for the State of Vermont filed a motion in the U.S. District Court in Vermont requesting entry and approval of a consent decree between the U.S. and 19 settling parties for the Bennington Landfill. This consent decree will result in the construction of a landfill cap, leachate collection and treatment system, groundwater diversion trench, and the excavation of soils and sediments contaminated by polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). The settling parties will perform the long term operation and maintenance of the completed clean-up. Contractors for the settling parties expect to complete the design of the cap and leachate collection system in August, with construction activities for the leachate collection system and diversion trench scheduled to begin shortly thereafter. The EPA case team for the Bennington Landfill site consists of Project Manager Ed Hathaway, Site Attorney Hugh Martinez, and Community Relations Coordinator Sarah White.

New Air Quality Standards

A few common air pollutants are found all over the United States. The U. S. EPA refers to these pollutants as criteria air pollutants, and has established limits protective of health and welfare for the following six criteria pollutants: sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide, ozone, particulates, and lead. Air monitors located in the state show that Vermont meets the national standards for these pollutants.

In recent years, a large number of studies have shown that exposure to ozone at levels lower than the existing ozone standard, and to particles smaller than that regulated by EPA's existing particulate matter standard, produce a variety of adverse health effects. For example, studies conducted in the northeastern United States and Canada show that ozone air pollution is associated with 10-20 percent of all of the summertime respiratory-related hospital admissions. Inhalation of very small particles are a health concern because they easily reach the deepest recesses of the lungs. Numerous studies have linked exposure to particulate matter, especially the smallest of particles, to a series of significant health problems, including premature death, aggravated asthma, and chronic bronchitis. In light of this information, in July of this year the U.S. EPA revised the ozone and particulate standards to make them more protective of human health.

The sources of these two pollutants are numerous and diverse. Emissions from tall industrial smoke stacks as well as automotive tailpipes contribute to the problem. In October of this year, EPA is expected to put forth a rule proposing limits on emissions from large industrial sources. Emission reductions in Vermont due to this rule will be relatively small due to the non-industrial nature of the State. This rule should improve the air quality that is transported into Vermont from other areas of the country.

EPA Approves Water Quality Standards in Vermont

EPA approved revisions to Vermont's Water Quality Standards last year and is currently participating in a water quality task group with all the key interest groups. On December 5, 1996, John P. DeVillars, regional administrator, approved the revisions to Vermont's Water Quality Standards as adopted January 23, 1996. These amended Water Quality Standards resolved three significant issues that had prevented an earlier EPA approval. Several Vermont agencies and the Water Resources Board worked cooperatively to develop language that was acceptable to EPA.

Water quality standards are laws or regulations that a state adopts to enhance water quality and to protect public health and welfare. The two principle goals of the Clean Water Act (CWA) of 1972 are accomplished by a state's water quality standards program which is authorized under Section 303 (c) of the CWA. These two goals are to:

- **restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters**
- **where attainable, to achieve water quality that promotes protection and propagation of fish, shellfish, and wildlife, and provides for recreation in and on the water. The second goal is more commonly referred to as "fishable/swimmable"**

Vermont, through its Water Resources Board, formally adopts water quality standards for each water body within the state. EPA's responsibility includes reviewing the new or revised water quality standards adopted by the board to determine if the standards meet the requirements of the CWA and the implementing regulations.

Last year, Vermont initiated a comprehensive review of its water quality standards including the stream classification system. On December 6, 1996, EPA provided detailed comments and recom-

mendations on specific issues to update and improve the Water Quality Standards. A task group was subsequently formed with representatives from the Agency of Natural Resources, Department of Agriculture, Forest Products Association, Green Mountain Power, Municipality Interest, League of City and Towns, Associated Industries of Vermont, Vermont Natural Resource Council, Conservation Law Foundation, Farm Bureau, Society of American Forests, Sierra Club, Watershed Association, Windham Regional Planning Commission, Ski Area Association, Lake Association, and Hydropower Coalition. These particular stakeholders were selected to represent the key interest groups in Vermont. Staff from US Fish and Wildlife Service, the Vermont Legislature, Water Resources Board, and EPA are actively participating in the review process by serving in an advisory capacity to this task group. The task group hopes to provide a report to the Agency of Natural Resources with recommendations on several key water quality issues within the next few months.

For more information regarding water quality standards please contact Bill Wandle at (617) 565-3233



Vermont Businesses are "Getting The Green Back"

EPA's New England office is kicking off our "Getting the Green Back" campaign designed to help businesses green the environment and their bottom lines. This campaign offers businesses, large and small across New England, a full menu of assistance and voluntary programs to help them green their facility or office in money-smart ways. The center piece of this effort will be success stories of companies across Vermont and New England that have demonstrated through a proactive approach that they are "Getting the Green Back".

EPA's New England office offers businesses technical assistance, public recognition, regulatory flexibility, access to green technologies, guidance on management systems, and a small business ombudsman. By making facility changes, organizational changes, initiating or expanding recycling programs, instituting self-audits, conducting public education and more, businesses are seeing the benefits of greening their operations. This campaign is designed to give a helping hand to the vast majority of businesses who want to be proactive when it comes to the environment.

For more information on the campaign contact Doug Gutro at 1-888-EPA-7341

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